GOOD
GUIDANCE
Stories +

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

FOR EMPLOYABILITY

PRACTITIONERS

Adequately equipped Practitioners [1] are a prerequisite for providing professional, high quality guidance provision, especially one that facilitates choice at key transition points, and has a lifelong impact on the clients' ability to manage their careers.

The challenge for the Practitioner is therefore to continually develop their own competency to do their job well and rise to the challenge of maintaining quality provision in an increasingly demanding environment. In particular, Guidance Practitioners need to be equipped with the skills and know-how needed to support those with diverse and sometimes complex needs, especially those with low-level skills and/or who are most distant from the labour market.

The Guide+ Continuing Professional Development programme provides up to 28-hours of facilitated peer-to-peer learning through eight integrated competency development modules. For the experienced practitioner, the combination of modules can be tailored to individual need. However, for those new to guidance practice, combining all eight will provide a unique continuing professional development experience, learning alongside others with diverse experiences and skills.

Facilitated Peer Learning
Peer Learning is a two-way, reciprocal learning activity that is mutually beneficial and involves the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants.

Using a Case Study Story as a learning tool, peer-to-peer learning encourages those participating to:
› Engage in reflective discussions
› Facilitate and participate in creative problem-solving
› Work collectively to develop realistic solutions to complex problems
› Develop the ability to identify and distinguish between critical and extraneous factors
› Learn from and share learning with others

Using Case Studies
The learning approach applied throughout the Guide+ Continuing Professional Development Programme is the use of a 'real-life' Case Study story as a learning tool.

Case Studies are used as they are proved to be ideal means for bridging the gap between theory and practice and between academic study and the workplace [2]. Also, they provide an effective means for applying skills, know-how, understanding and learned facts in a practical way to a given 'real-world' situation, especially ones that are complex and where the solutions are uncertain [3].

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[1] Guidance Practitioners: Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.
[2] Barkley, E. F, Cross, K. P. & Major, C. h. (2005:) Collaborative Learning Techniques: A handbook for College Faculty. San-Francisco: jossey-Bass, p. 181
[3] https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/case-studies (as consulted online on 2nd May 2016)

Target group and group size

Guide+ is a continuing professional development programme for Guidance Practitioners (those mainly providing employability support) who are working with the most vulnerable groups in our society, such as the long-term unemployed, labour-market returners, young people; and those from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

description of the local Curricula

The Continuing Professional Development programme is delivered through eight integrated modules as follows:

Module 1: Balance your work and the need to update your skills

Module 2: Develop one's own capabilities and understand any limitations

Module 3: Enable access to information

Module 4: Facilitate entry into learning and work

Module 5: Recognize and respond to clients' diverse needs

Module 6: Ethical Practice

Module 7: Improving IAG practice through effective partnership working and networking

Module 8: Communication and facilitation skills

At the outset of the programme, you will be required to complete a Self-Evaluation so that your personal baseline of skills and competences is captured. The Self-Evaluation will enable you to tailor the programme to your identified needs, and monitor 'distance travelled'.

Module 1:
Balancing your work and the need to update your skills

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will further develop your competency to balance your work priorities and the need to update your skills. You will:

› Gain an improved understanding and appreciation of the value of updating your professional skills and knowledge, and reflect on your personal needs.

› Gain a deeper insight into how up dating your own skills can improve your effectiveness and motivation in your job.

› Explore how periodic review of your job profile can contribute to you continuously improving your performance at work.

Competence focus
Improving your professional competency is the ideal way to perform well at work, raise motivation, enhance your career opportunities and job security in an uncertain employment market. Qualifications are a great way to show commitment to your personal and professional development, and improve the way you do your job. However, it is often challenging to find the time to commit to a short-term course and almost impossible to commit to a longer period of study, especially when you operate in a busy work environment. This module focuses on exploring the importance of the Guidance Practitioner ensuring

that competency development becomes a carefully considered balancing act, a permanent feature within their annual work programme review, and day-to-day work activities.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: High Quality Guidance? Balancing your work and the need to update your skills.

› PowerPoint Presentation: context and overview

› Audio-Visual

› SWOT Analysis

› Facilitated Discussions

› Peer to Peer Exchanges

› Group-work Activities

Module 2:
Understanding your limitations and developing one's own capabilities.

Module Aims & Objectives

By participating in this module you will reflect on your own practice and work environment with a view to better understanding your own limitations and how your own capabilities might be developed. You will:

› Have the time to reflect on your own professional skills set and limitations with the aim of reflecting on and informing a change of approach.

› Gain the opportunity to reflect on professional boundaries, and how peer support and inter-agency referral plays a key part in the employability support process and provision of appropriate support.

› Have time to reflect on limitations arising from the organizational context in which you work.

Competence focus

Responding to clients' diverse needs can be a daily challenge. Not being able to satisfy those diverse needs can be demoralizing, and reduce the potential for successful results. Therefore, it is important to recognise personal limitations and professional boundaries, whilst still being able to support the client holistically. With this in mind, this module focuses on exploring the need for continuous improvement of professional practice, and recognising when alternative professional help and/or specialist support is required.

It is highly recommended that this module be combined with Module One: Balancing your work and the need to update your skills.

Who is this module for:

Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods

› Case Study: Amina's Choice
› Powerpoint presentation: context and overview
› Audio-visual
› SWOT analysis
› Facilitated discussions
› Peer to Peer exchanges
› Group-work activities

Module 3:
Enable access to information and lifelong guidance

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will explore and reflect upon the skills and competences needed to enable your clients to take ownership of the guidance process. Also, that they are empowered to take control of their own personal and professional development throughout their working life. You will:

› Appreciate the importance of remaining open, listening carefully and avoiding making quick assumptions about clients.

› Recognise the importance of being well informed, having access to wide-ranging information and information sources, and being equipped with the information that diverse clients need to make informed choices.

› Recognise the importance of supporting the individual client in enabling and empowering them to take ownership of the employability process.

Competence focus
Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Facilitating access to information sources, resources and materials in a variety of formats is integral to the provision of employability support services. So, the practitioner needs to be well equipped and informed. Also, the practitioner should be able to enable and empower clients to confidently access, use and interpret information that is appropriate to their individual needs. With this in mind, this module focuses on your competency in accessing information and building information resources for a diverse client base.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 2 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: A visit to the Learning Shop – providing access to lifelong guidance
› Powerpoint presentation: context and overview
› Audio-visual
› SWOT analysis
› Facilitated discussions
› Peer to Peer exchanges
› Group-work activities

Module 4:
Facilitating access to vocational skills training and jobs

Module Aims & Objectives

By participating in this module you will explore the challenges of carefully balancing the requirements of professional employability practice with the complex needs of young people NEET. You will:

› Explore the importance of embedding effective practice especially in terms of listening skills, using effective needs assessment tools, employing approaches to facilitate inter-agency work, and maintaining professional boundaries.

› Identify and share effective approaches to helping young people make informed choices about their careers and be prepared for the demands of working life.

› Explore and reflect upon effective professional practice that focuses on helping young people identify and overcome barriers that prevent them from reaching their goals.

Competence focus

A 'day in the life of' a Guidance Practitioner can be both rewarding and challenging. In terms of being challenging, the guidance practitioner is required to carefully balance the complex needs of clients with the demands of the people and multiple agencies that surround the client. This is especially the case when working with young people who are NEET. How does the Guidance Practitioner carefully

meet the expectations of young people when their aspirations are high but their skills set low? Can the Guidance Practitioner set the young person off on the wrong path and if they do, how do they deal with the consequences?

Who is this module for:

Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods

› Case Study: Facilitating access to learning programmes and the labour market
› PowerPoint Presentation: context and overview
› Audio-Visual
› SWOT Analysis
› Facilitated Discussions
› Peer to Peer Exchanges
› Group-work Activities

Module 5:
Recognise and respond to clients' diverse needs

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will challenge your own capabilities in being able to respond to the client's diverse and sometimes complex needs, and make informed decisions on the type of support needed and opportunities they have, without making judgements or being prejudiced. You will:

› Explore and reflect upon your own attitudes towards equity and equality, towards cultural differences, discrimination and stereotypes, and how this can influence your practice.

› Recognise the importance of creative and pro-active problem solving and being able to distinguish between clients' main issues and those able to be addressed through your professional practice.

› Exchange ideas and lessons learnt with a view to improving professional practice within a multicultural environment.

Competence focus
It is widely recognised that not everyone learns in the same way. Also, socio-economic status, gender, culture or ability levels may predetermine the career/employment outcome for many. For the practitioner working in a multicultural and equality of opportunity environment, it is important to carefully recognise and respond to the diverse needs of clients. However, sometimes, the practitioner is faced with situations that challenge their own perceptions and prejudices. With this in mind, this module focuses on developing a greater appreciation of how a culture of equity and equal opportunities, and equal opportunities regulations can influence effective practice.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: The Story of Maria – recognising and responding to clients' diverse needs
› PowerPoint Presentation: context and overview
› Audio-Visual
› SWOT Analysis
› Facilitated Discussions
› Peer to Peer Exchanges
› Group-work Activities

Module 6:
Recognising and implementing ethnical practice

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will explore what is meant by 'Ethical Practice'; ethics is the study of or inquiry of values, about ideas of right or wrong, good and bad, what should or should not be done. You will:

› Explore and reflect upon day-to-day situations that challenge your own values, attitudes and perceptions.

› Develop a deeper understanding of ethics and your own moral philosophy as a guide to how you would deal with wide-ranging situations that challenge both personal and organizational values.

› Reflect on definitions and concepts of ethical practice and reflect upon these in order to improve professional practice.

› Enhance your understanding of how attitudes towards people and situations can shape the manner in which clients are dealt with.

Competence focus
'Ethics' questions the assumptions that underpin values and beliefs, which in turn inform an organisational culture and practice, day-to-day. It involves knowledge of codes of practice and ethical guidelines; thinking of how to apply standards to day-to-day behaviours (and services), and an awareness of legislation. Therefore, ethics is an important concept in the provision of guidance services. However, Practitioners can come across situations that challenge their own values, attitudes and perceptions. This module addresses challenging 'real-life' situations where the Practitioners' attitudes towards people and their circumstances can shape the manner in which they respond and support.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: What's Ethical?
  Dilemmas of Career Guidance Practitioners
› Poweroint presentation: context and overview
› Audio-visual
› SWOT analysis
› Facilitated discussions
› Peer to Peer exchanges
› Group-work activities

Module 7:
Improving Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) practice through effective partnership working and operating within networks

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will explore and develop a greater appreciation of the importance of how partnerships and networks can maximise the service offer for clients. However, not all Practitioners have the experience or competence needed to operate effectively. You will:

› Be able to define the difference between partnership working and working across networks, along with gaining a better understanding of how networks can improve the overall service offer.

› Explore and gain an appreciation of the processes and protocols that might be required to effectively inter-refer within delivery partnerships, and with other complementary delivery partnerships.

› Develop a greater appreciation of how to develop and maintain key contacts within partnerships that are time-bound and contract based, and those that are longer-term and established through Practitioner and/or the organisation's own networks.

› Explore how the outcomes for young people NEET might be enhanced by facilitating their confidence and competence in networking and building networks of their own.

Competence focus
As young people's needs rise and austerity cuts impact further on services, it is of growing importance on joining up services and fostering collaborations between like-minded partners to co-deliver specialist services. Within this context, the IAG practitioner needs to be competent in both partnership working and operating within networks. This module defines the difference between partnership working and working across networks with a view to exploring and reflecting upon the challenges and benefits of both.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners, Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: Mission Locale – Facilitating access to learning programs and the labour market
› Powerpoint presentation: context and overview
› Audio-visual
› SWOT analysis
› Facilitated discussions
› Peer to Peer exchanges
› Group-work activities

Module 8:
Using communication and facilitation
skills to deal with daily issues at work

Module Aims & Objectives
By participating in this module you will explore
how communication and facilitation skills, such as
listening, attention, questioning, probing, supporting
and challenging, ensuring a two-way understanding,
addressing criticism, and interpersonal skills, are all
used on a daily basis within a professional guidance
setting. You will:

› Recognise the importance of different communica-
  tion and facilitation skills needed to be effective in
  different situations and contexts.

› Improve your understanding of the importance
  of facilitating the development of the client's
  communication skills as part of the good guidance
  process.

Competence focus
Delivering a client-led, high-quality employability
service in a pressured 'in-demand' environment can
be challenging for the Employability Practitioner,
especially when appointments for clients become
scarce, and long waiting lists become the norm. This
situation can result in tensions between colleagues,
with clients, and with managers. This module looks
at a real-life situation where careful communication
is needed in order to remedy a situation by dealing
with issues professionally and in a pro-active way.

Who is this module for:
Employment/Careers Guidance Practitioners,
Job Brokers, Information, Advice and Guidance
Practitioners.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Maximum Group Size: 12

Methods
› Case Study: Using communication and facilitation
  skills to deal with daily issues at work.
› Powerpoint presentation: context and overview
› Audio-visual
› SWOT analysis
› Facilitated discussions
› Peer to Peer exchanges
› Group-work activities

GUIDE+ GOOD GUIDANCE

FOR EMPLOYABILITY

PRACTITIONERS

Continuing Professional Development Programme for
Employability Practitioners through peer-to-peer learning
exchanges and real-life case studies.

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